

fall. Autocracy is out of date as the events of the last few weeks have proved. What qualifications have hospital Matrons, even from the point of view of professional knowledge to control our destinies? What do they, as a class, know of preventive nursing, school nursing, district nursing, fever nursing, and many other branches of which a General Nursing Council will have to take expert cognizance? They have specialized in one Branch, and administer it well as a rule, and their pupils who have passed out into the world recognise this and are grateful. But now, in the organisation of our profession, we have come to the Valley of Decision. As the representatives of the employers Matrons are a small and isolated class. We shall never tolerate their claim to jurisdiction over the profession as a whole by divine right.

They *may* be leaders—real leaders—but only by its free choice of them. They must gain and hold its confidence, and there could be no finer position for any Matron than to take her seat on the Governing Body of her profession because its members have recognized in her the qualities they desire in a leader, and have placed her there of their free will, because they believe that she will be true to the confidence they repose in her, will protect their educational standards, and hold high the banner of professional honour.

As one of many who learn from the high standard you set before your pupils, both by example and precept, to honour the office of Matron, I have been proud, as a graduate nurse, to follow your lead, knowing well your single-minded devotion to the welfare of our profession

I am, gratefully yours,

MARGARET BREAY,

London, W.

#### "NOT."

To the Editor of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR MADAM,—Whoever sent you the report of our Annual Meeting on the 17th inst. failed to convey the enthusiastic feeling by which all we Irish nurse members of the I.N.A. were inspired, how unanimously we all are, officers and rank and file together, for a real independent Irish Board to conduct our educational affairs in Ireland, and how determined we all are not to be controlled from London by any Council of London Hospital Matrons and others. We consider the lack of tact with which our convictions and feelings have been handled by people who know nothing of our national aspirations, and care less, has been lamentable, and only foreshadows the inconsiderate and domineering manner in which we are to be treated for the future, as we can be outvoted by seven to one. The College of Nursing may have been started "whether the nurses want it or not"; then let me say for Irish nurses it is "not." We mean to preserve our own national individuality in any organisation we support. The clique of Englishwomen at the head of some of our Irish

hospitals have always been antagonistic to the principles for which our Association stands. They receive their orders to vote "anti" or "for" registration from St. Thomas' Hospital, London, and as soon as Irish nurses throughout the country realise this they will fight shy of the "Irish Board" nominated from England. We believe in the women, Irish and English, who have for years been one with us in our long fight for State Registration, many of whom have paid most generously as delegates, of the I.N.A. They have stuck to their principles and ours. If you can find space for this long letter please publish it, as every attempt is being made by the "College" party to break up our Irish Nurses' Association, by which we mean to stand.

Yours faithfully,

MEMB. I.N.A.

The Editor regrets that a number of letters are held over for want of space. They will appear next week.

#### OUR PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

##### QUESTIONS.

*April 7th.*—How would you render first aid to a patient suffering from burns in a workman's cottage, where few remedies were available, and what steps would you take to secure the efficient nursing of the patient?

*April 14th.*—What precautions would you take in nursing patients in a ward devoted to the reception of persons suffering from venereal diseases? How may infection spread (1) from one patient to another, (2) to the nurse-in-charge?

*April 21st.*—How are wounds infected? How may infection be avoided or minimized?

*April 28th.*—How would you prepare a patient for the operation of removal of an eye? Describe the subsequent nursing care.

#### IMPORTANT NOTICE.

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#### ORDER "THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING."

The method known as "on sale or return" is about to be prohibited. This is due to the restrictions on the import of paper, a limitation in its turn imposed by the necessity to set free more shipping tonnage for the import of food. It is necessary, therefore, that all readers of "The British Journal of Nursing" should without delay place orders with their newsagents for the regular supply of the paper, otherwise they will not be able to obtain a copy. Newsagents will provide only for an assured sale.

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